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## A Precious History for our Boys and Girls.

On Saturday, the 24th of November, while we were in Memphis, the Moderator of the General Assembly, Dr. KERR, said to us, "Bro. Robinson, when you preach to some of our people to-morrow, I want you to preach, as I heard you preach once about how all the afflictions of the people of God work together for good." We complied with his request, little thinking, that within three days, our friend Dr. Kerr, would himself have such special need of that very truth of the Bible to sustain his stricken soul.

We left him on Monday afternoon, presiding over the General Assembly with a dignity and grace that we seldom had seen equalled. And the first news we heard, was of the death of his noble boy on Wednesday. We had intended writing a notice of his sad bereavement this week, with special reference to that request that we should preach on that particular subject—the afflictions that come upon God's people. But before we began our article, we received from a friend the following account of the noble boy's death, which is so simple, so beautiful, and so worthy the serious thought of all our boys and girls, who have been recognized as members of the Church in their baptism, that we prefer to present this beautiful story just as it was told to us. We earnestly hope that the children will all read it, and be led by it to imitate the wonderful faith of this little boy, ANDREW HART KERR.

"ANDREW HART KERR, JR., died Wednesday, the 28th day of November, after fifteen hours sickness, at 10 o'clock, A. M., without a groan or a struggle.

He was 13 years and 18 days old. Six hours before the adjournment of that great body, of which you speak in such just and exalted terms in your paper, and the Moderator, Dr. Kerr, was receiving the warm congratulations and expressions of cordial love and esteem from the noble men just risen from the Lord's council, his only son, ANDREW HART, JR., the most promising youth of my acquaintance, and at least the equal of any I ever knew, was stricken down with cholera, and died in fifteen hours.

"Hart" was a child of the covenant, and though he had never yet made a public profession of religion, his was the most triumphant death I ever witnessed.

When the child was thirteen months old, I was present as his believing parents gave him to God, by the hands of the late beloved and excellent Dr. Edgar, of Nashville, and then I knew the Master was there present, ratifying and approving the dedication, and often since have I said, that if I had no other and higher testimony in proof of the "doctrines of the covenant" in regard to infant baptism, than what I saw and felt upon that occasion, it were enough.

The child developed into the boy in size and age, but the man in intellect. Such gifts of mind as his are nothing less than genius. With uncommon powers of concentration, he was able to master the most difficult class-books in so short a time as to excite the surprise of his teachers that he knew anything of his lessons whatever.

He had been a companion for his father for years, seeming to prefer the association of grown-up persons to that of those of his own age. In fact, Hart was one of those peculiar characters who have no youthful period; from childhood they are men and women. Between this extraordinary boy and his father, there existed relations of confidential intimacy rarely found between parent and child. They strongly resembled in appearance, thought alike, and upon all subjects seemed to have tastes and feelings similar—and, while the father and son loved others, toward whom such feelings would be natural, their souls appeared knit together in relations which could not be shared with another. From his earliest recollection, Hart had been trained up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and though a child in years, was well versed in the doctrines of the church of his fathers. The day before his death he sat during the entire session of the General Assembly among its members, listening with the closest interest to its proceedings, and at the close was deeply moved by his father's parting address and the farewell greetings he there witnessed. When he was informed that he would probably not get well, and his father exhorted him to place his trust in his Savior, and to give his heart to God, he prayed long, earnestly and with remarkable force and intelligence, for mercy and forgiveness through the merits of a crucified Redeemer, in whom alone he relied for salvation, and when he concluded his prayer, in which he exhibited a thorough acquaintance with the plan of salvation through the

cross, he gave the most indubitable assurance of his acceptance and reconciliation in Christ, and continued to rejoice and praise God, and to tell what a blessed Savior he had found, until his strength was too far spent to talk. The Rev. Drs. Adger and Joseph R. Wilson, of the Assembly, were present, and enquired faithfully into the ground of his hope; and when he told them he knew, young as he was, that he was a sinner, and that he must be saved, if saved at all, through the atoning merits of a crucified Redeemer, and that he had given his whole heart to God, and now felt that he had rather go and be with Christ and the Angels, than stay in a world of sin and sorrow, these good men could not refrain from shouting "Glory! Glory! Glory to God in the highest!" as they heard then and there such clear evidence of His faithfulness to His promises, in the case of this child of the Covenant. They bid the crushed parent rejoice, and not weep amid such splendid manifestations of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Some hours before his death he requested that "Rock of Ages" be sung, in which he joined, shouting and clapping his hands in the happiest manner; meanwhile exhorting all present to meet him in heaven, and sending similar messages to his mother and sisters, and to other absent ones, and entreating all not to weep for him, but rather rejoice in the goodness and glory of God, who was going to take him from a world of sin and trouble up to Himself, where he would very soon be singing with Angels, and where he would take his seat in the "General Assembly, and among the Church of the first born, in Heaven." No doubt when he made this last remark, his thoughts were running on the General Assembly he had a few hours before seen his father preside over and close. Later he requested to be sung, "Come humble sinner," and again raising himself almost to a sitting posture, he repeated, "I love thy kingdom, Lord, the house of thine abode," in clear distinct tones, and said, "let us all sing." One time when his distressed father was weeping over him, and begging for grace to be given his "poor boy" for the last struggle, he spoke up quickly, "Pa I am not poor, I am rich."

Very often he repeated the first line of that hymn which begins, "Lord I am thine, entirely thine," and evidently appreciated to the fullest extent its meaning.

Calmy he bid each one present goodbye, exhorting them to meet him in heaven, and gave to his sister, who was present, a kiss for his nine sisters, who were absent, calling each by name, saying, "tell ma not to be distressed about me, that I died happy in Jesus, and have gone to heaven, where she and my little sisters must meet me." When asked if he was afraid to die, he promptly replied, "No, no, who would be afraid to meet his Maker's face, with Jesus for his friend?" "I know in whom I trust." He spoke of different friends and relatives who had gone before, and whom he expected to see in heaven, and said, "I love my father and mother, and sisters very much, but I love Jesus more, and would rather go to him than stay here." He suffered comparatively little, and never shed a tear from the time he was taken till he breathed his last. He was in full possession of his mental faculties, to all appearance, up to the instant the breath left his body, and until he could speak no longer, said his trust was in the Lord, that he was dying happy, without pain; and when he could not utter the words, he would respond with his head, conscious to the very last, never for a single moment doubting or wavering in his faith and hope of salvation through Christ Jesus as his Redeemer.

Thus went out from earth one of the brightest minds I ever knew, and a bud of promise has been early dropped from its stem, of which there was greater hope than any left behind. But, as he said himself, "It is all right, God knows what he best."

We who knew and loved him must bow, heavy as is the rod. His poor, stricken and heart broken father shouts the praises of God for His great mercies in giving to his darling child such a triumphant death; at the same time, his poor, weak human nature totters to the fall under the crushing weight of his blighting bereavement. He begs you to pray for him. His trust is right, but has a temperamental over-ardent attachment for and devotion to his children, as well as most extreme nervous sympathies, which you may readily suppose overwhelm him upon such occasions.

Have the courage to "cut" the most agreeable acquaintance you have when you are convinced that he lacks principle. "A friend should bear with a friend's infirmities, but not with his vices."

## A Great Man Fallen in Israel.

We announced in our last report of the death of Dr. E. D. McMaster at Chicago. In this death another of the truly great men of the Presbyterian Church has passed away. However widely we have differed from the views of Dr. McMaster upon certain questions of church policy, we have entertained for him, ever since we knew him, the highest regard, as a noble hearted Christian gentleman, a profound thinker and one of the most accomplished scholars of the Church.

We find in the *North Western Presbyterian* the following interesting account of his last hours, which we transfer to our columns as a more befitting tribute of respect to his memory than any that our partial acquaintance with Dr. McMaster's history would enable us to offer.

He had been in his usual health until the 29th of November, when he was confined to his bed by a severe attack of pneumonia. After suffering much for about a week he was thought to have passed the crisis of danger, and strong hopes were entertained of his speedy recovery. But on Saturday last the disease assumed a more alarming type, and from that time he continued to grow worse, until Monday afternoon, when about 3 o'clock he breathed his last.

He was attended in his illness by his brother, Rev. A. S. McMaster, D. D., of Poland, Ohio, and his nephew, Gilbert McMaster, Esq., of Pittsburgh, who had been informed of his dangerous malady, and hastened to see him. He also had frequent conversations during his illness with his colleagues, the professors, and with the students of the Seminary, some of whom attended him night and day, and with other Christian friends of the city.

Nothing could exceed the clearness and energy with which he gave his dying testimony, in favor of the cross of Christ, as the only hope of sinners, and the only hope of a ruined world. His mind seemed to feed upon the word of God as the very life of his soul, quoting Scripture largely himself, and refuting it when quoted in his presence by others. "I die in God," said he; "I die without a fear, because I die in Christ." "I die in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who redeems us from iniquity and the damning evil of sin, by giving us a new spiritual nature. Seek him and put your trust in him." He repeated more than once the passage, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He said, "the time of my departure has come; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforward there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." &c. As the closing scene approached he said, "Into thine hands, O Father, I commit my spirit, through Jesus Christ, thy Son." As he lay with his eyes intently looking upward his brother said to him, "what are you looking at so intently, brother?" He said, "I see heaven opened, and Jesus sitting at the right hand of God." "Is Jesus with you?" he was afterwards asked. "Yes, O yes." After a while he was asked again, "Is Jesus still with you?" "Yes, yes."

With these and many similar expressions of child like confidence and unshaken faith in God his Redeemer, did this great and good man pass from the bosom of the Church below to the presence of his Saviour. But it is not for us, in this brief notice of his departure, to sketch his life, or attempt a portrait of his character. This will doubtless be done by other hands. A few leading facts only have come to our knowledge, and may here be stated until a fuller account can be given. Rev. E. D. McMaster, son of Rev. Gilbert McMaster, D. D., of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, was born in the State of Pennsylvania, in February in the year 1806, and was licensed to preach the gospel in that church in the year 1829.

He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in the Presbyterian church in February, 1831, and became pastor of the Ballston Presbyterian church, N. Y. He was elected to the Presidency of the South Hanover College in 1838, and to the Presidency of the Miami University in 1845. He was elected to the chair of Systematic Theology in the New Albany Theological Seminary in 1849, and elected to the same chair by the General Assembly in the Theological Seminary of the Northwest in 1866.

He was inaugurated here early last September, at the opening of the present session, and entered upon his work with great fidelity and zeal, discharging its duties to the satisfaction and delight of all his students. Dr. McMaster was confessedly one of the foremost men of our church. He was one of the representative men of his times and country. Endowed by nature with noble powers of intellect, blessed with the highest advantages of education, and adorned by the indwelling of God's spirit, he was enabled at an early age to take a high position in the ministry. He succeeded well in all that he attempted. He was recognized universally as a scholar, a theologian, an educator, and a preacher of the first rank. The multitude of young men placed under his instruction at the different centers of his influence, especially those who studied under him at New Albany, all bear witness to his learning and ability as a teacher. As an instructive gospel preacher, and a thorough ex-

pounder of the word of God, there have been few men in the ministry superior to him. From the time he entered upon these last duties until he was prostrated by sickness, his colleagues of the Seminary, as well as the students, were struck with the exceeding richness and fullness of his occasional expositions of Scripture in the Seminary, and his religious addresses and sermons. He impressed all who heard him in our church here, or met him in the social circle, as being eminently a man of God, a master workman who needed not to be ashamed. His views on all subjects seemed to impress all who heard them, as clear, strong, judicious and Scriptural in an eminent degree.

The Latest Novelty in our Foreign Ecclesiastical Correspondence.

One Prof. Emerson seems to have been the delegate from the Old-school Assembly, as also delegated by the delegate of the New-school to the recent meeting of the French Synod. We have seldom met with a more remarkable specimen of illustrating a precept by the contrary practice, than the speechifications of Prof. Emerson and Dr. Pressense, on the union of sentiment in favor of a total separation of Church and State and against rationalism. Said Prof. Emerson to the Synod:—

"I have already delivered to you a letter from my esteemed friend, Rev. Dr. Eldridge, who was appointed by the New-school Assembly to represent that important Church before you; but as he was unable to leave his pastoral charge at Paris, he has entrusted to me the duty of also representing before you the New-school branch of our American Presbyterian family. I may, therefore, consider myself as the *avant courier* heralding the probable union of these two great branches of the American Presbyterian Church. (Great applause.)

"Mr. President, it is my pleasant duty to assure you of the warm sympathy of our churches, and their cordial interest in all that relates to your welfare. While we differ from you in regard to minor details of government and practice, there is between us a substantial agreement in the great principles of evangelical Christianity. We also agree with you in regard to the important question of a total separation of Church and State, and we cannot but feel a lively interest in the success of your heroic effort to secure independence and purity by means of the voluntary principle. We fully sympathize with you in the contest you are waging with rationalistic error, to which our brethren here present from Great Britain have so emphatically referred. We are engaged in the same contest against the rationalistic tendencies of the present times, as they are developing themselves in America; and we are using the same weapons, relying for success on 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'"

"My countrymen will never forget the kind letter, full of Christian sympathy, signed by over three hundred French Protestant pastors, which you published to the world in the darkest period of our frightful struggle. The sympathy expressed in that letter profoundly moved us, and was received with joy by loyal Christian men all over the United States. Nor can I forget the enthusiastic with which you received the American delegate at your last Synod, when our war was still unended, and the intense interest you manifested in all his statements with regard to the sacrifices of our American churches during that struggle. These things have sunk into our hearts, and I am here to tell you so."

"Mr. President, it is late, and I will close my remarks by giving you the statistics of the Old and New-school bodies united.—They number 62 Synods, 255 Presbyteries, 4033 ministers, 4146 churches, 905 candidates for the ministry, over 400,000 communicants, and we have raised for church purposes during the last year five millions of dollars, which is about one hundred francs per member." (Great applause.)

Said Dr. Pressense the Moderator in reply:—

"Sir, I cannot find words to express the depth of interest we felt in that eventful, that mighty struggle—how we followed its varying phases with the profoundest emotion; how, as you seem to lose ground, our hearts stood still with apprehension for the liberties of mankind, all at stake in that contest; then how our hopes renewed themselves as you pushed back the *thousand hosts of slavery*, and our admiration and wonder grew as we learned the story of the heroic sacrifices made by the people and the churches of the North for the success of the great cause! On I could not despair of you, or our country, or her destiny, as we learned these things. But yet, as the contest was prolonged, we could not resist a feeling of dread lest, after all, disappointment might be in store for us; and, as the long siege of Richmond dragged on, we eagerly scanned the news, and did not cease to pray earnestly for your success. And when at last the glorious news came over that Richmond was taken, that the pro-slavery Confederacy was ruined, that liberty and loyalty and Christianity had triumphed, we wept tears of unutterable joy. Yes, we have you for your heroic deeds, for your strong arms, for your large hearts, for your clear perceptions, and because your cause is our cause. And now, we are with you still; we go with you *unto the gates of hell*; we have no fears that you will lose in any way the true results of your war; you have broken the bonds of slavery, you have destroyed its power in the

State and in the Church; you have recognized the manhood of our African brother, and without doubt you will protect him by giving him the ballot. We are for universal suffrage; the principle is sure to triumph; and we are completely with you in your resolution to enforce it in the name of humanity, of justice, and of religion."

Now, Dr. Pressense is a learned man—as has written, we are told, a great book. Prof. Emerson is probably a learned man also. But in our judgment, if the cause of a pure church as against a political church, and of spiritual Christianity as against rationalism, depends upon them or the sort of men they represent, the State-church politicians and the fanatics will soon have it all their own way.

Rev. Mr. Lefevre's Sermon.—The doctrinal argument.

We had not the space last week to notice, as we desired, the remarkable sermon of Rev. Mr. Lefevre, at the organization of the Patapsco Presbytery in Baltimore, which we published in full in our last issue. We therefore refer to the subject now; and if we have occasion to repeat portions of his discourse by way of illustration, no harm will be done, even to those who read it carefully, while those who did not will be profited by having their attention called thus distinctly to its more significant parts.

What afforded us special pleasure in reading this discourse was to find in it an endeavor to exhibit the great doctrinal points involved in the present issues with the General Assembly. And we are free to express the judgment that no one has, as yet, brought out these higher and more transcendental aspects of the controversy with more simplicity, power, and logical beauty than Mr. Lefevre. No thoughtful man in the Church can have failed to notice with regret the propensity on both sides of the controversy to discuss the questions involved simply as questions of parliamentary and constitutional rules. If nothing more serious than such questions are involved, then indeed has the Church been agitated with needless and unworthy strife. But if this question of the Church and of the sphere and functions of the Church is really a question of theology, a question of matter of *de fide*, a question concerning an essential and elementary truth of the gospel, then has this strife not been needless, but absolutely necessary to the real peace of the Church.

Mr. Lefevre's argument from the essential and inherent nature of "the immovable Kingdom" is one which deserves careful study. In breadth of thought compares very favorably with Dr. John Owen's discourse before the Parliament on "the shaking of the heavens and the earth," from the same place in the xii. chap. of Hebrews. And without meaning to flatter our young Baltimore brother we venture the opinion that in most of the essential points of a good sermon this is more than equal to the discourse of the great English divine.

We venture to re-state the chief points of this doctrinal argument from the nature of "the kingdom that cannot be moved," and to ask a careful attention to them as containing the germinal truths out of which the protests against the General Assembly should spring:

\* \* \* \* \* The Church owes loyalty only to Him. He is the sole King in Zion. There are no intermediate kings and law-givers, even as there are no intermediate priests. No council or ecclesiastical now stands between the Church and Him who is her King and Prophet, in the same exclusive sense precisely, in which He is her Priest. As long as the constitution of the Church embraced such persons or bodies, so long it must from the necessity of the case be subject to change. All these could be shaken, "as things that are made." They were forever removed in the great change when God took away the Old and established the New dispensation.

Moses and David and Aaron, with their long lines of human and temporary successors, and the real authority over God's house, with which their typical relation to Christ invested them, have come to a perpetual end and a perpetual Head in the Divine and Eternal Son of God, who is the sole King in Zion. The kingdom is so far forth immovable, in that it has an ever living King "that cannot be moved."

2. The second element in the constitution of the Christian Church, which we bring to your notice as illustrating its immobility, is the fact that Jesus Christ, her King and Law-giver, has delivered to her a perfect and complete rule of faith and practice in the Holy Scriptures. This is so intimately connected with the foregoing that it is difficult to separate the two in treatment. Jesus Christ, as the everlasting Theanthropic King and Law-giver of the Church has completed the revelation of God's will to His people. It was the very process of adding to an incomplete revelation that caused previous "shakings" and change. But now there is nothing to be added. "The whole coun-

sel of God is set down in Scripture," \* \* \* unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men."

Another attribute of the Christian Church which illustrates its immovability, is its spirituality. It is not a kingdom of this world. It is a Spiritual kingdom. Before the introduction of "the immovable kingdom" God gave His people a civil as well as an ecclesiastical constitution. The civil constitution furnished, so to speak, the platform on which God wrought out His purposes of Redemption, as made known to His people of old. But it is easy to see, that so long as Church and State remain united in any relation—so long one interpenetrates the other—the ecclesiastical constitution cannot be immovable—must be subject to change and "shaking." The ever growing and changing civilization of men and communities demands new political institutions; and if the Church is united to any institution which belongs to the category of "the things that are made," or the works of the creature, then she must change with them. When they are shaken She totters; when they are overthrown, She falls. And such was Her history "until Shiloh came." But in the last and greatest of the Divine upheavals, the last element of cleaving changeability was shaken from Her Church's loins, and She rose from Her chrysalis wrappings, the IMMOVABLE KINGDOM. And this, taken in connection with her unchangeable charter, exactly counterpart to man's unchangeable individual responsibility, makes the kingdom of the unchangeable King a kingdom that cannot be moved.

\* \* \* In order to be immovable and ecclesiastical, the Kingdom of God must be equally incapable of becoming the ally or the enemy of the State in any of its designs. And it was because Christ was the King of such a Kingdom, that the Jews refused to accept Him as their Messiah, and crucified Him as a blasphemous impostor. A king that would have no court, no army, no realm, they could not understand. They wished David to be revived. They hypocritically procured His crucifixion on the charge that his royal claims were dangerous to Caesar's authority. But their real objection to Him—that objection which lifted opposition into malignant and murderous hostility—was that He was not dangerous to Caesar.

And this precisely is the grand difficulty in the world's mind in reference to the nature of the church—a difficulty that makes the church an incomprehensible phenomenon to all those whose souls are set upon the changing things that "are temporal and visible." Independent and subjection, resistance and submission, *de jure* titles and *de facto* possessions, are all questions having a moral side—are all mixed questions; and therefore the church ought to take cognizance, say they, of all such questions on their moral side at least. Not so thought Christ. Not so says the immutable law of "the immovable Kingdom." Why, every act of the civil power, whether executive or legislative or judicial, has a moral side, but Christ the King demands all these questions to one ordinance, and forbids them to the other.

The morality of all these matters, together with their expediency and constitutionality, are referred by God to the authorities of the movable kingdom. 3. The next and last attribute of the Christian Church which we will now notice as illustrating her immovability, is the germinal principle of the government which Her King has established within Her. Now, taking for granted that our Standards express the mind of Christ on this as on every other department of His Kingdom, we are at once struck with the fact that they provide courts of rulers corresponding to the different senses in which the word church is used in Scripture, to-wit: as denoting the congregation of believers worshipping in a particular house, or the several congregations of a particular city or district, or the whole body of believers in the world. Thus we have congregational, district, synodical, and, when the development is finished, ecumenical Presbyteries. But the forming principle which runs through all is, "the power of the whole is in every part, and the power of the whole is over the power of every part." That is to say, the primary court of the church, by her divine and immovable constitution, has all the power of the whole church universal. The power of the whole is in every part. Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I—the God-man with all my power—"in the midst of them." Nevertheless, because the church on earth is created after the pattern of "the things in heaven,"—because the visible is begotten in the very image of the invisible,—"the power of the whole is over the power of every part," reviewing the lower, receiving and issuing appeals, and seeing that the lower does not transgress the immovable limits. The very idea which lies in the nature of the higher court is the power of review and of receiving appeals, in order that by the judgment of the greater number a faithful execution of the unchangeable charter may be secured. It is utterly abhorrent to the church's nature that the higher court should command the lower to violate the laws of Her King, or to change or increase or diminish the complete and perfect code which God has given Her.

No one who has any true conception of Scriptural exposition will question the skill, the clearness, and the irresistible force of the deductions thus made from the nature of the kingdom that cannot be moved. And if they are well and truly set forth, then it seems impossi-

ble to deny the force of the "uses,"—speaking after the manner of Owen,—which the preacher derives from them. Continues the preacher:—

It is common for men who partake of the motion of a moving body, to refer their own change of place to the fixed points around them. Thus men refer their own motion in connection with the earth's to the sun and the stars, which are indeed immovable orbs. It requires celestial observations to correct the mistake. For this reason we have invited you this evening to make a few celestial observations, by which *real* may be distinguished from *apparent* motion. We abide where we have ever stood, on the *immutable Word of God*. We seek grace to serve God *acceptably* by faithfulness to the constitution of the immovable kingdom.

\* \* \* \* \* It is the gathering-up and concentration of the power of the whole into the highest court—a thing perfectly abhorrent to "the immovable kingdom"—that is the fruitful mother of schisms; and the guilt lies at the door of those that do the deed. You may indeed construct outward visible unity on this principle of concentration of power, but it is a unity without value and without life. It may be shaken and removed, for it belongs to the works of the creature. The progress of science and civilization, and, more than all these, the quickening of the individual conscience by the word and Spirit of God, inexorably call upon it to change or dissolve.

The summary statements of the doctrinal heresies of the General Assembly in the light of the foregoing view of the nature of the immovable kingdom, shows clearly enough that something far higher than questions of mere forms of procedure and interpretation of constitutional rules is involved in the controversy which has divided the Church. We ask our readers to compare the following statement of the issues with the miserable attempt to conceal the true issues by our quondam "middle men."

(a) That Assembly in '61 assumed and exercised the power of the Supreme Court of the U. States, to interpret the civil constitution of the land. They decided between two equally venerable interpretations of that constitution. The question is not whether they gave a correct interpretation or not. The point is, that they exercised a forbidden and pernicious power, carrying the church away from her immovable sphere. They changed her name from a court of Jesus Christ into a political conclave.

(b) But in 1862, the Assembly, whilst in the main consistent with its former position on this point, also assumed the other principle, that the Church is superior to and the master of the State; for it declared: "It is the clear and solemn duty of the National Government to preserve at whatever cost the National Union, and \* \* \* to crush power by power." The church, assembled as a court of Jesus Christ, dictated a policy to the State,—and that too a policy of blood. She dropped the keys and seized the sword.

(c) The church in '64 through her highest court not only added to the word of God, but contradicted that blessed book. The question has lost none of its importance because of the abolition of slavery by the civil power; it still remains in all its eternal and infinite importance, and asks of every one "what shall be the rule of faith and practice in the kingdom of God,—the word of God or the commandments of men?"

(d) And if any doubt whether this be the real question, the orders of the Assembly of '65 ought to put the doubt to rest in every mind. That Assembly not merely reaffirmed these novel and monstrous doctrines in violation of the word of God and the Standards of our Church, but formally required a *cordial belief* and approbation of them as a condition of membership and office-bearing in the Church; and constituted the Executive Committee of the Board of Domestic Missions and their Secretary, a court of final and superior jurisdiction to judge of the orthodoxy of ministers in reference to the Assembly's doctrines on loyalty and freedom.

(e) And the Assembly of '66 reaffirmed all the past corruptions of doctrine and manners, and boldly took into their own hands all Church power. They assumed original jurisdiction over ministers, elders and Church members. They dissolved Presbyteries and punished office-bearers without the form of trial or indictment. They required unquestioning obedience to whatever the Assembly might choose to ordain. They made their own ordinances and deliverances as binding upon the whole Church as the written constitution. What more could be done? If I should attempt to detail to you a tithe of the acts of that once venerable court, in which they violated the Crow's Rights of Christ and the doctrines of Scripture as interpreted in our Standards, the sun would rise before the work was done. To have an adequate impression of the extent to which the Church has been revolutionized, one must read the whole proceedings and debates of the past six Assemblies in the order and fullness of their history. Even liberty of speech is gone, and the voice of testimony is hushed.

We are persuaded that it is no waste of space in presenting again so much of what we published last week. If thereby we have fixed the attention of our readers on the special points of this discourse, and secured a careful review of them, we will have done them a service.



## Free Christian Commonwealth

R. T. STUART ROBINSON, Editor.  
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A most remarkable "Narrative of the state of Religion."

The so-called Synod at Lexington has been very chary hitherto about reporting its utterances to the Christian people of Kentucky. It seems to have thought it necessary to break the matter by degrees to the people, lest the shock might prove too great, at finding a Synod which claims to be the true successor of the Protestant Synod of Kentucky, openly retracting all its protests, and most meekly accepting even the acts of Assembly, which the same men have pronounced "repugnant to the word of God."

Hence we suppose the precaution to broach the subject first through the more solemn and pious form of a "narrative of the state of religion within the bounds of the Synod." Accordingly we find in the last number of the organ a so-called "Narrative of the state of Religion," extending through more than five columns. And such a narrative is certainly without precedent in Presbyterian church courts, as a brief but faithful analysis will show.

A single paragraph in the opening states, in substance that "the state of religion is now evil"—"by no means encouraging"—"a deplorable low state of piety." This is what any intelligent Christian would anticipate who knows anything of the sort of means of grace which the scattered sheep, which have strayed off from the old Synod, under the lead of "dead head" ministers, have enjoyed for months past. Fed upon the low demagogue cant of emissaries who have been laboring to conceal the true issues from them—their bad passions roused by every sort of appeal to their selfishness and their prejudices—practised upon by every sort of pious trickery, to secure their suffrages for a party and principles not congenial to them—how should religion flourish among them?

Despatching this in short order—the "religion" question as being in quantity too small to deserve further notice, this remarkable paper proceeds to a narrative of the history in general of the Assembly and Synod for five years past. And seldom have we met with so notable a case of "making history." Our readers in Kentucky who know something of the protests of the Synod every year since 1861, against the usurpations of the Assembly as contrary to the word of God, will be able to judge of the general tenor of the history from the preliminary statement of the thesis which the history is made to defend. Just conceive of Drs. Humphrey and W. L. Breckinridge, the South-loving Mc Kee, and the "almost-persuaded-to" Clelland and Hogue, solemnly asserting in a narrative of the state of religion the following historical proposition:

During the years 1861-1866 the General Assembly took certain actions as to the duties of our General Government, in a time of civil rebellion, and relative to the duties of our people to the same in that emergency; also relative to the emancipation of the slaves in the United States; also relative to the conduct of these Christians who had aided the rebellion. And while these acts strictly accord with those of the General Assemblies of the United States and Scotland, of former days, in like cases; and also accord strictly with the religious convictions of the great body of our Presbyterian family, and what their consciences required of them as religious duty, at the time, certain persons of this Synod organized opposition to these acts, and have persisted in this opposition until a schism has been made in the body of the Synod.

It will be seen that sure enough, as Dr. R. J. Breckinridge said, "they blot out the old and make a new record."

In confirmation of a statement so remarkable coming from even a "so-called" Synod of Kentucky, the narrative proceeds to recite the substance of the acts of 1861 and 1862 with approbation thereof. Then follows an elaborate historical argument attempting to establish the identity of the spirit and sentiment of the Stanley-Matthews Abolition effusion in 1864, with all the previous acts of the Assembly!

Next we have the following remarkable account of the Orders of 1865, which if a true and honest account we do not see why Drs. Humphrey and Smith should wish to "dead letter" them. Just conceive of a "narrative of the state of religion" which pretends to give the substance and spirit of the monstrous orders of 1865—which led to the Declaration and Testimony—in the following sweet paragraph:

Directed Presbyteries to treat with kindness, ministers and churches who are disloyal, or not in sympathy with the former deliverances of the General Assembly on the subject of slavery; and to receive them when they properly acknowledge and renounce their errors. Against these acts certain persons of our own number, prepared, signed and published a Declaration and Testimony, saying of them, &c., &c.

If the religion preached by these gentlemen to the people is not more truthful than their history; and if their expositions of the gospel are as defective as their expositions of the acts of 1865, nobody need wonder to hear them say that the state of religion among the people is "evil" and "deplorable."

Getting thus to the matter of the

Declaration and Testimony, this narrative proceeds to analyze that document, and in spite of all their misrepresentations of it, this third column of their paper contains about all the honest, outspoken truths to be found in the entire narrative. Next follows near half a column of citations from the famous Melan committee in the Assembly of 1866, to show that Drs. Melan and Thomas have as had an opinion of the Declaration and Testimony as this so-called Synod has. In October, 1865, the Synod of Kentucky, which is now claimed to have condemned the paper as a slander, &c., saw no other objection to it than "its terms, its spirit and intent as looking to further agitation of the Church, at a time when mutual forbearance is called for among brethren, and requested Louisville Presbytery to review its action." And yet in this narrative, and in other papers, the Lexington meeting has the singular effrontery to assert that the Synod of 1865 denounced and condemned the Declaration and Testimony as slander, rebellion, &c., never hinting that then, as before, the Synod condemned the acts of the Assembly also, against which the Declaration testifies.

A very significant fact also in this "narrative" on the Declaration and Testimony, coming from the representatives of the quondam Danville Seminary, is that it cites and formally endorses the Princeton Declaration, that the Declaration "is founded upon an erroneous theory of the office and prerogatives of the Church." If its doctrine was to prevail a seal would be set upon the lips of the Church, and she would be forbidden to testify against many sins, and enjoin many duties." Thus the whole record of the Danville Seminary "is blotted out," as a testimony against the Princeton semi-Erastian theory of the Church, and the Princeton theory fully accepted.

This remarkable narrative of the state of religion next proceeds to review with approbation the Assembly's acts of 1866, in the matter of the Louisville Commissioners, and gravely declares that "the Commissioners took the strange position that they had already been condemned, and that the proposition to hear them was a mockery, &c." And cites approvingly the action of the Assembly excluding the subscribers to the Declaration from all church courts, and citing them for trial to the bar of the next Assembly. And then charges the Declaration and Testimony men with "propagating false views of Presbyterianism—as to the constitution of the Church and the powers of her courts!"

After thus recanting the entire testimony and pretexts of the Synod in years past; recanting the entire teachings of Danville concerning the Church; and giving the lie to the protestations a hundred times repeated by the large majority, if not by every one of the men themselves who issue this narrative, of their opposition to these acts of the Assembly, and their determination to regard them as "dead letters" if not as null and void, the public will not be surprised at the following "narrative" and judgment concerning the peace-seeking effort of Messrs. Breck, Worral, Rout and others in the Lexington address:

Also others of our own number, prepared and signed a paper and addressed it to "the Presbyterian people of Kentucky," and by means of it sought to organize a conspiracy against the authority of the General Assembly, and in the interests and behalf of those who were under process of discipline before the General Assembly—making vigorous efforts to induce the entire Church in Kentucky to commit herself to open resistance to the authority of the Assembly, and persisting in efforts to turn away the hearts of our people from the Church of our fathers—the Church of our choice—and the Church of our love—and these efforts have culminated in schism in the body of this Synod.

This narrative of the state of religion next proceeds to relate the doings of the Moderator Breck, at Henderson, in a manner that can but amuse all sane men who witnessed those proceedings. It will, for instance, both amuse and amaze our brethren generally who were present, to find this "narrative" solemnly avowing that Moderator Breck was "backed up by the unseemly public clamor or made by persons designedly present in order to act public clamor and violence in support of the Moderator's decision!"

A rather odd libelism winds up this remarkable narrative. After declaring for the third time over that the Declaration and Testimony men "have been convicted by the public wisdom of the Church, of slander—of teaching false theories of the Church" &c., &c., the "narrative," with all the artlessness of Paddy himself denounces them for demurring to appearing for trial before the court which has already "convicted" them on the charges—in the following style:

Being held by the Church to the responsibility of their own teachings and acts, instead of embracing the opportunity which the summons of the Assembly gave them to put themselves right before the Church and make a good defence of their own Declaration and Testimony, seem to have placed themselves in the attitude of having shrunk from their own words, and fled from the responsibility to which their own public declarations hold them.

This is certainly an odd enough specimen of logic to close so odd a narrative of the state of religion! Men "shrink from their own words and flee from re-

sponsibility" who demur to appearing to be tried before a judge and jury who have already "convicted" them! And that too by a court which has no more right to try them than a council of the Camanche Indians! A large portion of the men who issue this "narrative" were cited by appeal, in an orderly manner to be tried for attempts at ecclesiastical murder, before the Synod at Henderson, a court that had not "convicted" beforehand. Whether of the twain have "shrunk" and "fled from responsibility"—those who seceded from the lawful jurisdiction of the Synod at Henderson, or those who, as law-maintaining Presbyterians, refuse to appear before an Assembly transformed into a sort of "Bureau of ecclesiastical justice, organized to convict?"

We have devoted so much space to this narrative not merely for the sake of exhibiting a curiosity in the way of a *laissez ecclésiastique* to our readers. With all its folly and wickedness this utterance of the so-called Synod at Lexington has a profound significance in many points of view.

1. It evinces clearly the sad consequences of continued tampering with and trifling with great principles of truth by middle ground compromises with fundamental error and lawless usurpations in the Church of Christ. When in 1862 the *True Presbyterian* pointed out whither all attempts to compromise with the Assembly's heresy of 1861 must lead, and charged upon Northern fanaticism the purpose to bring into the Church the very errors and to do the very acts of lawless violence and usurpation which this "apologetical narrative" is devised to justify, the cry was raised—"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this?" The witness was denounced as a defamer of holy men and holy courts; and those who issue this narrative affected more charitably to believe it impossible that Presbyterians could seriously mean to say and do such things. "Wait! wait!" was the cry, wait till the excitement passes. Then will we have these apostasies checked or else show ourselves more ready than you to "come out from among them." But threefold worse than all our apprehensions is the degree of apostasy; and behold now the very men who then whispered of our fierce, uncharitable spirit, and "harsh" language in charging such things—now themselves doing the very things and taking pleasure in them that do them! Behold the men that once gloried in the free, manly, outspoken method of Kentucky Presbyterianism, now attempting to disguise, under the solemn and unsuspected form of an official narrative of the state of religion, this tissue of partizan sophistries, special pleadings, false issues, exaggeration, and suppression of facts, to beguile the people into acquiescence in apostasy and usurpation!

2. This narrative has special significance as an official utterance of the formal abandonment and recantation of all those principles which have heretofore distinguished the "middle men"—the "strategists"—the "moderates" of Kentucky—from the Jacobinical radicals of the Church who, with Dr. Monfort, insist upon the "acts of the Assembly and the (crucial) Constitutional Amendment," as the only platform for the pacification of the Church. And, in a higher doctrinal point of view, this narrative in denouncing no longer merely the "terms" and "spirit"—but also the *doctrines* of the Declaration, as "false theories and views of the fundamental principles of Presbyterianism" is manifestly not only an abandonment of, but a formal and positive condemnation of the doctrines heretofore held, notoriously, by the entire church in Kentucky. It is therefore in the strictest sense proper to denominate this as the "Apostate Synod of Kentucky!"

3. It is plain therefore that we have at last reached an open and final issue in Kentucky. Whatever dishonest "strategy" may continue in use, among the ministers and elders individually, to beguile ignorant, credulous, and weak-minded people, still we have at last the advantage of an open officially declared issue in Kentucky between those that hold the errors and defend the usurpations of the Assembly since 1861, and those who reject the one and resist the other.

The Presbyterian's charitable hopes of the Southern Church.

In a notice of the late Assembly at Memphis, the *Presbyterian*—after indulging his little spleen in the usual manner of insinuated untruths and indirect defamation in order to avoid the responsibility of untruth and defamation, concerning certain churches "lying round loose in the Border States," and the signers of the Declaration and Testimony, and others of damaged ecclesiastical reputations (as though Drs. Boardman, Vandyke and others had not damaged their ecclesiastical reputations, if at all, by being found in company with the *Presbyterian* and his Jacobin allies)—proceeds in the following patronizing style to express his judgment of the future prospects of the Southern Assembly:

If the standard thus lifted up should be hailed and rallied to by those who

are now out in the wilderness, and evidently anxious for a home, we may expect the Southern Church, by these various accretions, to grow into a body of respectable size, spreading over a wide space, and having access to large numbers of people. It will certainly contain within it some men of fine abilities and undoubted scholarship. Some of the most eloquent men that ever graced the American pulpit will be found among its ministers. It will be a compact, hard-working, and unless it admits some divisive element in its various unions, a homogeneous body. If it escapes its great present peril—the forced secularization of its ministry through want of support—we think it will live and prosper. It must, from the necessity of the case, be the chief defender and propagator of Presbyterianism among the white population of the South—a population destined to increase more rapidly now than ever before—and because of this, and for the sake of the more precious interests of Christ's kingdom, we wish the Southern Church abundant grace and abundant success.

The prophet has furthermore a vision reaching "away down to the closing years of the century; when the question of re union with the Southern Church &c."

We are sorry to say that we cannot reciprocate the prophet's hopeful vision. To you view everything seems to indicate that long before the closing years of the century the present Jacobinism shall have worked out its sad results in the Northern Church, in a repetition of the New England apostasy. And the present Southern Church purified by the fires of affliction shall stand forth as the sole representation of the ancient and true Presbyterian faith—gradually having absorbed the "remnant" of the true people of the North, and sending Missionaries to Philadelphia to break the true bread of life.

How a Strategist said "What will you give me and I will deliver him unto you?" and how Dr. Monfort would not "covenant with him for the thirty pieces of silver."

Referring to the "minority man," and discussing the real "gravamen" of our church difficulties, the *Presbyter*, two weeks since, made the following singular revelation concerning the "middle men" in the Assembly at St. Louis—meaning, of course, Drs. Humphrey, W. L. Breckinridge and Smith—and concerning one of them who has advocated "dead letterism"—meaning, we presume, Dr. Humphrey, who we learn from various sources, has been laboring for eighteen months past to find a place for us out of Kentucky:

A paragraph in one of these articles reminds us of a theory in regard to our difficulties which some of the middle men in the St. Louis Assembly held and talked much about in private. It was not announced in public, for the reason, as we suppose, that the men who held it, were opposed to any action likely to pass, and they did not feel at liberty to present that which they thought of doubtful success. The satisfaction which is expressed to us by one of the leading middle men, who has since advocated the dead letter doctrine, is that "the gravamen of our difficulty is Dr. Stuart Robinson. He is the object of our intense feeling of dislike, and an emphatic condemnation of his, and if action could be had to reach him, the church would be satisfied." We replied to our brother that he was not entirely right, that nothing short of a complete adherence to the action of the Assembly of 1865, and an emphatic condemnation of the Declaration and Testimony would pacify the Church in the North.

Had this story concerned some other minister than ourselves, we should feel free to speak in somewhat plain terms of so treacherous and cowardly an offer of a victim to the fanaticism which Dr. Humphrey himself denounced to the St. Louis pastors as "perfectly brutal and evil in its spirit." But lest our good spoken of, should we go into the merits of the question, we content ourselves with simply calling attention to the fact as illustrating the treacherous malignity which all the while lurked under those smooth words of peace and harmony in the church, and of remonstrance against the Assembly, which used to flow so unctuously from Danville.

The Christian public should bear in mind that this proposition of the "Dead Letter" Doctor to the Radicals at the St. Louis Assembly, occurred before any plea of just provocation could have been offered. For, up to that time, as our readers well know, we continued to "hope against hope," that the "middle men" of Danville would still be brought to stand out honestly, and make good their professions of general concurrence with those who resisted the tyranny of the Assembly. Nor had we as yet uttered aught against either Drs. Humphrey, Breckinridge or Smith, that could be fairly construed as unkind.

Whatever suspicions we felt of their sincerity and honesty we kept to ourselves. It is therefore an anachronism to judge of the provocation for the above cold-blooded proposition from what we have been compelled in faithfulness to say of the course of these gentlemen since the Assembly. Now with this revelation of Dr. Monfort before them, we leave our readers and the Christian public to judge between our "harsh" utterances concerning their disreputable course in the Assembly—which they and their friends make it convenient to *disseminate* personally offensive—and this deliberately proposed conspiracy against us even while yet affecting all the brotherly love and all the piety. Have we affirmed anything against any of them as disreputable as this disgraceful proposition reported by Dr. Monfort?

Nothing more strikingly illustrates the effect on the under-

standing, and the degrading effect upon the conscience and the sense of honor of this expediency theory, than the fact that these Danville strategists should persuade themselves that Dr. Monfort and his party would entertain such a proposition of bargain and sale.

As to the question of the "intense dissatisfied faction," we deem it not worth while to go into that. That "the wish is father to the thought" with these gentlemen; that the chief dissatisfaction in Kentucky was created by their own treacherous efforts; and that the dissatisfaction out of Kentucky was in large measure because of our defence of principles in which these gentlemen professed to concur with us, if it were not largely, also, the result of Danville strategy in bounding on crazy fanaticism by all sorts of false clamors against us, are facts which are now becoming well understood in Kentucky. Certain it is that we should be very loath to exchange reputations and "dissatisfactions" with either of the three.

In the same article Dr. Monfort, with characteristic free-spokenness, proceeds to set forth the real "gravamen." At that writing he had evidently not seen the Lexington capitulation. And yet his statement in *these* of the terms on which the middle men may be restored to confidence, coincides so remarkably with the terms in which the Lexington meeting makes its submission—as will be seen in the paper which we published last week—that one might well suppose the meeting had Dr. Monfort's ultimatum before them in preparing their surrender. Says the *Presbyter*:

The gravamen of our difficulties lies in this, that our Church having taken a wise and noble stand against the sinful rebellion which threatened the life of the nation, and a Scriptural action against slavery, and in favor of emancipation, ministers, elders and members, churches and church courts have denounced and promised to resist, what has been done, and have organized tactful efforts to carry out their views and schemes. The Assembly, in arranging the Declaration and Testimony men has, indeed, included the boldest and more defiant of the opposers of the action of the Church, but they are all upon the same platform, and are called to answer for the same offense. As there is but one indictment for the same offense, done at the same time by all, whatever will satisfy the Church for one, will satisfy for all. If Dr. Robinson had gone off to the Southern Church, before the Assembly met, that body would have dealt with the remaining Declaration and Testimony signers as it did, or in some similar manner. Dr. Robinson has said many severe things of the Assembly, for which he should repent, but if he had said only what is in the Declaration and Testimony, he would properly have been called to account with other signers of that document. The gravamen of the difficulty will not be removed until every signer shall have left us, or recanted, and until all others shall cease to denounce and defy the Church, and until all shall acquiesce in the action of our highest court on October 25th, 1866, which have secured to us a bright and honorable page in our history, and relieved us from complicity with slavery and secession.

Seeing that the Lexington meeting accepted these terms, we do not see why the faithful should be called upon to go to the expense of sustaining an organ for Kentucky. Wherein now does the *Presbyter* fail to represent the views of the Lexington meeting; solely, so far as we can see, in speaking out honestly. And has it come to this, that a special organ for the purpose of concealing the opinions of the leaders in Kentucky from the people is deemed essential?

Regarding the "able and unanswerable" argument.

DEAR COMMONWEALTH: Will you allow a little space in your paper to the following brief notice of the "able and unanswerable" argument of Mr. Hogue of Lebanon, in relation to General Assembly matters, as reported in the Western Presbyterian! The "able and unanswerable" argument deserves no special attention, except that it served as a fair specimen of the "unanswerable" arguments at present employed by the lesser lights of the radical Synod of Kentucky in their "able" efforts to enlighten ignorant Presbyterians!

Last Sabbath, Mr. Hogue found upon his pulpit a note, signed by a member of his church, propounding to him the following questions in substance:

1. Do you with Dr. Humphrey and others, believe that the Pittsburgh order or examining rule, as it is called, is inoperative, a "dead letter?"

2. Is the *ipso facto* order of 1866 any more binding than the order of 1865?

3. Who is responsible for the schism in Kentucky?

Then follows the "able and unanswerable" argument abounding in quotations from our "Form of Government;" and in which argument, we are told, the speaker "read several passages from the Minutes of the last Assembly." It was then a premeditated and prepared speech, was it?

The documents and the reporter were on hand. But why the "note signed by a member" "found upon his pulpit"? Why all this arrangement? It occurs to this writer that much heavy machinery was run, in bringing to light the "able and unanswerable" argument.

But we desire to notice briefly the argument itself. It relates first to the Assembly's orders of 1865, and it commences with a quotation from our "Form of Government," "every Christian church is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion, and the

qualifications of its ministers and members &c."

Now this quotation, in the connection in which it is used, simply means nothing at all, or it means that the Assembly did institute new terms of church communion, and that the Assembly had the right so to do. If this is meant, we make no reply; "unanswerable" as the argument is, it is not likely to do much damage, even to the most ignorant.

But we are further told that the Assembly "made no new tests on the subject of slavery." "It is the Southern Assembly that has made new deliverances upon slavery." "It was to meet this new doctrine that called forth the Pittsburgh order." Now the Southern General Assembly has not employed this writer to defend its action. It needs no such defence. It is our object simply to notice the "able and unanswerable" argument reported to the Western Presbyterian. For the sake of argument, we will admit that the Southern General Assembly did all that has ever been slanderously charged against it. What is then the character of the "unanswerable argument"? It is simply this. The General Assembly of Pittsburgh ordered not only that Presbyteries should examine ministers from the South, asking admission as members, but that church Sessions should examine persons applying for membership regarding their connection with the rebellion; and special advice is given to church Sessions as to their action in relation to young men in the Border States, who under the influence of their superiors, adopted erroneous views of the doctrine of "State Rights."

That is, the Southern General Assembly took action upon slavery, therefore the Northern General Assembly assume to determine the political doctrine of "State Rights," and order the examination of persons applying for membership in the Church, as to their politics—persons who never had any connection with the church South—persons who perhaps never heard of a Southern General Assembly. Surely the argument is logical—surely it is "able and unanswerable."

But the execution of these orders "is left entirely discretionary with the lower courts." So it is stated in the "unanswerable" argument. To prove this, extracts were "read from the Minutes of the last Assembly." Perhaps the following was read: "Your memorialists, therefore, do hereby respectfully represent, in reference to the recent persistent attempts made in various parts of the Church, to have the deliverances and injunctions of the General Assembly, reconsidered and changed; that the General Assembly has nothing in the matter aforesaid to change, nothing to explain, nothing to modify, nothing to take back, nothing to amend, in any way, shape, or form whatever." The above, as the reader is aware, was adopted by the last Assembly.

But these orders we are told are inoperative—they are a "dead letter." Here we turn Mr. H. and his reporter over to Dr. Stanton—Moderator of the last Assembly—or to the Doctor who now leads radical Presbyterians in Kentucky—be they willing or unwilling. Regarding the Assembly orders of 1866—the *ipso facto* order, Mr. H. or at least his reporter, claims that the Assembly did what "she had the most express constitutional authority" to do. We have nothing to say in reply to this part of the "able" argument. We would simply refer Mr. H. and his reporter, and the readers of the Western Presbyterian to the speech of Dr. W. L. Breckinridge in the last Assembly. We prefer that those brethren should answer each other. When they agree among themselves, then may those who differ from them feel called upon to speak.

Now, Dear Commonwealth, such is the "able and unanswerable" style of argument employed throughout Kentucky, by those who boast that they possess the talent and the piety of the Presbyterian Church. Thus do they undertake to enlighten the ignorant, and to strengthen the wavering. X.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth, The General Assembly.

An able, wise, and pious General Assembly is of boundless importance to the Presbyterian Church, but the General Assembly that now is, is tearing down what it once built up. By its political acts and military temper it has made itself the political enemy of more than one-half of the nation. It has cut itself off from all possibility of doing them good. It has built up a wall of separation between it and them, which nothing can remove but the hand of God. It has driven thousands from its doors, and prevented other thousands and thousands from coming. It has degraded the Church by dragging her through the sloughs of politics and war. It has shattered and divided her, and destroyed one of the strongest bonds that holds the nation together. During the war and since, it has been schooling its partisans and their young people, into the false and ruinous idea that the Church is a great judge and decider of military and political questions. But this necessarily involves her

in all the wars and national debates in the world, and necessarily shatters the very foundations of her existence.

All this inevitably leads to despotism, not only on the part of the Church, but it shows the way and leads the State to the same spirit. We are neither blind nor rash when we say, that it was the example and influence of the Church that helped to make Missouri the first legally and religiously persecuting State in the Union. In that State men are now lined, imprisoned, and murdered, because they will not consent to receive their license to preach the gospel from the Commonwealth. It was the spirit and tone of military and political preachers that upheld, if they did not suggest the Rosecrans Order, which order prohibited the right of church courts to sit, except by the permission of military authority. This was suspending the very existence of the Church upon the temper and will of military men.

It is with regret and shame that we say it, but history will write it down, that whatever was done harshly, and cruelly against Church, people and property, during the war, was suggested and abetted indirectly, if not absolutely, by the tone, spirit and acts of the great church courts of the North; and that most of them did it, and that all of them had the will to do it, that is to send men to the South, to take possession of and hold other people's ecclesiastical property, is the history of Church honor, justice, and brotherly love. And had it not been that the State authorities were far more just and honorable than the ecclesiastical, these captors would have held these ill-gotten gains still. As a sample look at the shameful holding on to the Zion Church in Charleston.

It is not wonderful therefore that such a body of men, having done such things, and having departed so far from the grounds of Christianity, should by violent and unconstitutional means shut out a whole Presbytery from the General Assembly, simply because they had protested strongly and definitely against the unscriptural, unpresbyterian and unchristian conduct of the Assembly. Nor is it wonderful in the workings of human folly and weakness, that, in defending this extraordinary act of despotism, they should do it by arguments equally extraordinary and unconstitutional. For if the General Assembly, without charges, without arraignment, and without trial, can shut out a whole Presbytery from its body, and exclude them from the ministry, so far as all the courts of the Church above the Session are concerned, then they do by that very act, virtually supersede all Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods. And if the acts of the General Assembly, for the past six years, are to be taken as an "authoritative explanation" of our ecclesiastical code, then it is clear, as the sun shining in his strength, that to the Presbyterian Church of this country there has been imparted a totally new and opposite direction.

Hence in the presence of such despotism and revolutionary violence, it is not strange but very natural that there should be an increasing multitude of people who feel that this is not at all the church with which they at first united, and especially not the church whose doctrines and ecclesiastical code they accepted when they were licensed and ordained to preach the gospel.

And no arrogance can be greater and no silliness can be weaker than to expect intelligent, conscientious, and independent men to ignore what they have long studied and professed. And there never was a time in which there was greater need for God's true people to stand firm and faithful against all military, political and worldly prostitution of the Church than now. And just as they do this they stand well and best for all other interests. PHILLOS.

The Northern Methodists yet in advance in Loyalty.

The Nashville Advocate cites from a Presbyterian paper and comments as follows:

A writer in one of the Presbyterian papers used the following language: "When I joined the Church thirty-five years ago, I was asked, 'do you believe in Jesus?' Answer, 'I do. Do you love his people?' I do fervently. This was the first question. Now, alas! the convert is examined thus: 'What State do you come from?' It will not do to reply, 'From a state of sin and misery.' You must *sectionalize* yourself, either North or South. If South, 'What side were you on during the civil war?' 'Are you for Johnson or the Congress majority?' 'What do you think of the Freedmen's Bureau?' 'What do you think of Thad. Stevens and Brownlow?' If you answer, 'I count all things but loss that I may win Christ,' the convert is in the political gall of bitterness, and the bonds of partizan inquiry! Should he mournfully inquire, 'Why am I, whom Christ has saved, rejected by a professed Church of Christ?' the only answer is this: 'The General Assembly has decided by four to one that you are not loyal to the Government!' I must turn Black Republican, therefore, in the United States, to get to Heaven! In Austria I must turn Papist! In Utah, Mormon! In China, Buddhist!"

"Did the Apostles ever ask any convert, 'Are you loyal to the Roman Empire?' What was Christ's test question? 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?'" Who then is he who dare withstand God?

Ab, yes! Pity tis true. But the General Assembly is not the only unconstitutional body that has acted this foolishly and, as many believe, wickedly. The Northern Methodists are in advance of the Assembly in all matters of this kind. Pity such work had not been left to them.







